

REMARKS

With the foregoing amendment, Applicant, in effect, has replaced the original claims 1-97 with new claims 98-173. It is believed that these claims are patentable over the prior art. Entry of this Preliminary Amendment and action toward a Notice of Allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael D. Beck". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Beck" being more prominent than the middle initial "D.".

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Clean Version of the Amendment to the Specification

Prior to the first line of the specification and after the title, please enter the following:

Reference to Related Application

This application is a continuation of co-pending U.S. Application No. 09/872,905, filed on June 1, 2001, entitled "Tissue Distraction Device" in the name of the same inventors, which claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/274,372, filed on March 8, 2001.